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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In the Application of:	Chenet, et al.	Art Unit: To Be Assigned
		Examiner: To Be Assigned
on:	Method and Installation for Making an Optical Fibre	
U.S. Serial No.:	To be assigned (PCT/FR00/01985)	
Filed On:	Herewith	(Docket No. IXAS-133)

Hartford, Connecticut, January 9, 2002

Commissioner of Patents
ATTN: BOX PATENT APPLICATION
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Dear Sir:

Please amend the above-identified patent application prior to examination as follows:

In the claims:

Please amend claims 4, 5, 9, 10, and 12-15 as follows:

Claims

4. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the (meth)acrylic ester other than methyl methacrylate used to prepare the first polymer used to form the core of the optical fiber is chosen from the group consisting of ethyl acrylate, ethyl methacrylate, methyl acrylate, propyl acrylate, propyl methacrylate, butyl acrylate and butyl methacrylate.

5. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the methyl methacrylate and the methacrylic ester or esters used to prepare the beads of the first polymer by aqueous suspension polymerization are purified by subjecting them separately to:

an operation of filtration through a bed of basic and activated alumina, preferably under compounds possessing labile hydrogen, the highly polar compounds, such as biacetyl, and the polymerization inhibitor;

followed by at least two successive operations of distillation under partial vacuum and under an atmosphere of an inert and dedusted gas, so that, on conclusion of these distillation operations, virtually all the polymerization inhibitor, the biacetyl and the transition metal ions have been removed;

and, finally, an operation of filtration under an atmosphere of an inert and dedusted gas, making it possible to remove virtually all the particles or dust with a mean diameter of greater than or equal to 0.1 pm;

and in that the purified methyl methacrylate and the purified (meth) acrylic ester or esters are subsequently conveyed directly to the polymerization reactor via hermetically closed means while maintaining them under an atmosphere of an inert and dedusted gas.

9. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the suspension polymerization reaction is carried out under a pressure substantially equal to atmospheric pressure or slightly greater.

10. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that, among the dried beads of the first polymer which are obtained from the conclusion of stage (2), those with a mean diameter of less than 200 microns are removed.

12. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the suspension average molecular mass (Mw) of which varies from 100 000 to 200 000 with a polydispersity (P) of the order of 2.

13. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the level of unreacted residual monomers on conclusion of the suspension polymerization reaction is less than 2 mol% with respect to the total of monomers used in the implementation of this polymerization.

14. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the operations of separation, washing, drying, storing and transfer of the beads of the first polymer used to prepare the core of the optical fiber are carried out under an atmosphere of an inert and dedusted gas.

15. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the beads of the first polymer used to prepare the core of the optical fiber are extruded at a maximum temperature of 280°C.

As required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, a copy of the amended claims marked up to show all changes relative to the previous version of these claims is attached to this Preliminary Amendment.

REMARKS

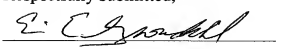
Claims 1-17 are now pending in this application. Claims 4, 5, 9, 10, and 12-15 have been amended. The amendments set forth herein are made only to place the claims in proper format for examination. None of the amendments are made for reasons related to patentability of the invention and none of the amendments are intended to narrow any of

the claims as compared to the claims in the application as filed. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the above identified patent application is in condition for allowance. Early notification of the allowability of claims 1-17 is courteously solicited.

No fee is believed to be required for this Preliminary Amendment. However, if any fee is required, or otherwise if necessary to cover any deficiency in fees already paid, authorization is hereby given to charge our Deposit Account No. 50-1631.

Dated: January 9, 2002

Respectfully submitted,



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Marked Up Version of Amended Claims

4. (Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, [2 or 3,] characterized in that the (meth)acrylic ester other than methyl methacrylate used to prepare the first polymer used to form the core of the optical fiber is chosen from the group consisting of ethyl acrylate, ethyl methacrylate, methyl acrylate, propyl acrylate, propyl methacrylate, butyl acrylate and butyl methacrylate.

5. (Amended) The process as claimed in [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, characterized in that the methyl methacrylate and the methacrylic ester or esters used to prepare the beads of the first polymer by aqueous suspension polymerization are purified by subjecting them separately to:

an operation of filtration through a bed of basic and activated alumina, preferably under compounds possessing labile hydrogen, the highly polar compounds, such as biacetyl, and the polymerization inhibitor;

followed by at least two successive operations of distillation under partial vacuum and under an atmosphere of an inert and dedusted gas, so that, on conclusion of these distillation operations, virtually all the polymerization inhibitor, the biacetyl and the transition metal ions have been removed;

and, finally, an operation of filtration under an atmosphere of an inert and dedusted gas, making it possible to remove virtually all the particles or dust with a mean diameter of greater than or equal to 0.1 pm;

and in that the purified methyl methacrylate and the purified (meth) acrylic ester or esters are subsequently conveyed directly to the polymerization reactor via hermetically closed means while maintaining them under an atmosphere of an inert and dedusted gas.

9. (Amended) The process as claimed in [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, characterized in that the suspension polymerization reaction is carried out under a pressure substantially equal to atmospheric pressure or slightly greater.

10. (Amended) The process as claimed in [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, characterized in that, among the dried beads of the first polymer which are obtained from the conclusion of stage (2), those with a mean diameter of less than 200 microns are removed.

12. (Amended) The process as claimed in [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, characterized in that the suspension average molecular mass (Mw) of which varies from 100 000 to 200 000 with a polydispersity (P) of the order of 2.

13. (Amended) The process as claimed in [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, characterized in that the level of unreacted residual monomers on conclusion of the suspension polymerization reaction is less than 2 mol% with respect to the total of monomers used in the implementation of this polymerization.

14. (Amended) The process as claimed in [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, characterized in that the operations of separation, washing, drying, storing and transfer of the beads of the first polymer used to prepare the core of the optical fiber are carried out under an atmosphere of an inert and dedusted gas.

15. (Amended) The process as claimed in [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, characterized in that the beads of the first polymer used to prepare the core of the optical fiber are extruded at a maximum temperature of 280°C.